

In the United States Court of Federal Claims

OFFICE OF SPECIAL MASTERS

No. 19-1851V

(not to be published)

DONNA HYATT,

Petitioner,

v.

SECRETARY OF HEALTH AND
HUMAN SERVICES,

Respondent.

Chief Special Master Corcoran

Filed: May 31, 2023

Special Processing Unit (SPU);
Attorney's Fees and Costs

Bridget C. McCullough, Muller Brazil, LLP, Dresher, PA, for Petitioner.

Sarah Christina Duncan, U.S. Department of Justice, Washington, DC, for Respondent.

DECISION ON ATTORNEY'S FEES AND COSTS¹

On December 6, 2019, Donna Hyatt filed a petition for compensation under the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, 42 U.S.C. §300aa-10, *et seq.*² (the "Vaccine Act"). Petitioner alleges that she suffered a left shoulder injury related to vaccine administration a defined Table Injury, which was caused-in-fact by the influenza vaccine she received on December 8, 2016. Petition at 1. On November 16, 2022, I issued a decision awarding compensation to Petitioner based on the parties' stipulation. ECF No. 46.

Petitioner has now filed a motion for attorney's fees and costs, requesting a total award of \$28,686.77 (representing \$27,294.40 in fees and \$1,392.37 in costs).

¹ In accordance with Vaccine Rule 18(b), Petitioner has 14 days to identify and move to redact medical or other information, the disclosure of which would constitute an unwarranted invasion of privacy. If, upon review, I agree that the identified material fits within this definition, I will redact such material from public access.

² National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986, Pub. L. No. 99-660, 100 Stat. 3755. Hereinafter, for ease of citation, all section references to the Vaccine Act will be to the pertinent subparagraph of 42 U.S.C. § 300aa (2018).

Petitioner's Request for Attorney's Fees ("Motion") filed Apr. 17, 2023, ECF No. 52. In accordance with General Order No. 9, counsel for Petitioner represents that Petitioner incurred no out-of-pocket expenses. *Id.* at 2.

On Apr. 24, 2023, Respondent reacted to the motion, indicating that he is satisfied that the statutory requirements for an award of attorney's fees and costs are met in this case, but deferring resolution of the amount to be awarded to my discretion. ECF No. 53. Petitioner did not file a reply thereafter.

The rates requested for work performed through the end of 2022 are reasonable and consistent with our prior determinations, and will therefore be adopted. Petitioner has also requested 2023 hourly rates as follows: \$350 per hour for work performed by Bridget McCullough - representing a rate increase of \$50; and \$165 per hour for paralegal Katy Yoos. Motion at 1. I find these hourly rates to be reasonable and will award the attorney's fees requested. (And all time billed to the matter was also reasonably incurred).

Furthermore, Petitioner has provided supporting documentation for all claimed costs. Attachment to Motion at 9-25. And Respondent offered no specific objection to the rates or amounts sought.

The Vaccine Act permits an award of reasonable attorney's fees and costs for successful claimants. Section 15(e). Accordingly, I hereby GRANT Petitioner's Motion for attorney's fees and costs. I award a total of **\$28,686.77 (representing \$27,294.40 in fees and \$1,392.37 in costs) as a lump sum in the form of a check jointly payable to Petitioner and Petitioner's counsel, Bridget C. McCullough.**

In the absence of a timely-filed motion for review (see Appendix B to the Rules of the Court), the Clerk of Court shall enter judgment in accordance with this Decision.³

IT IS SO ORDERED.

s/Brian H. Corcoran
Brian H. Corcoran
Chief Special Master

³ Pursuant to Vaccine Rule 11(a), the parties may expedite entry of judgment by filing a joint notice renouncing their right to seek review.